

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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***For Immediate Release***

**APRIL 27, 2004**

Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on April 23, 2004, **MARIO L. GORDON**, a/k/a “Rio,” age 24, of Chicago, Illinois, was sentenced in United States District Court in East St. Louis, Illinois. GORDON, who had previously been convicted by a jury of conspiracy to distribute more than five grams of crack cocaine and possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine, was sentenced to 360 months’ imprisonment, 5 years supervised release and was fined \$700.

The investigation established that between December 2001 and February 5, 2002, GORDON, and co-defendants, DANIEL ROSS, a/k/a “Chino,” and KENNETH JOHNS, a/k/a “Kilo,” were transporting multi-ounce amounts of crack cocaine from Chicago to Carbondale for distribution. In Carbondale, most of the crack cocaine was distributed from Brentwood Commons Apartments and the Sunset Motel. When GORDON was arrested, on January 29, 2002, agents located approximately 10 grams of crack cocaine that GORDON had tried to hide. The sentencing court found that GORDON was involved with over one kilogram of crack cocaine. GORDON received an enhanced sentence because he, ROSS, and JOHNS possessed guns during their crack cocaine dealing. GORDON was on parole for two prior armed robbery convictions at the time he committed the federal offenses. JOHNS has already been sentenced to 168 months’ imprisonment for his involvement in the crack cocaine conspiracy. ROSS has been convicted by a jury and is awaiting sentencing.

The investigation was conducted by the Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff’s Office, Southern Illinois Enforcement Group, and Drug Enforcement Administration, pursuant to their participation in the Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Under the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative, federal, state, and local law enforcement and prosecutors are working together to prosecute drug dealers, felons in possession of firearms, and criminals that use firearms to commit violent offenses or drug trafficking offenses in the system that will get them the most time. The Jackson County Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative is a joint and cooperative effort of the United States Attorney’s Office, Jackson County States Attorney’s Office, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, Carbondale Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff’s Office, Murphysboro Police Department, and Southern Illinois Enforcement Group.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Amanda A. Robertson.